

benefits all, not just a few, one that all Members of Congress and the American people can support.

UNIVERSAL COVERAGE INEVITABLE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Washington (Mr. McDERMOTT) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. McDERMOTT. Mr. Speaker, we in the Congress are in danger of becoming as irrelevant to medicine as the use of leeches are to the cure of patients.

Last night the House took what some called a bold step to approve to thoughtful, modest bill to advance stem cell research to use science to alleviate pain and suffering and prolong life.

To its credit the House followed the guiding principle written thousands of years ago by Hippocrates, the father of medicine. "I will apply dietetic measures for the benefit of the sick according to my ability and judgment; I will keep them from harm and injustice."

That statement was taken directly from the Hippocratic Oath that I and every other medical doctor swears to uphold. That is what we did last night. We took a small step on the path of hope last night but it will not go very far.

The President, bowing to the religious fanatics, has already declared he will veto the stem cell bill. Vowing allegiance to the right wing, the President will use the veto stamp to wash his hands of any hope that science can commute a sentence of debilitating pain and suffering, or even death, imposed on countless Americans.

Other nations are intent on living in the 21st century with or without the United States. Under this administration, we are more dependent than ever on countries to loan us money to keep the lights on under the Republican budget assault. Now the administration intends to make us more dependent than ever before on countries for advances in medicine and science.

We have great research scientists in this country, including the University of Washington. The President will tell them that his administration chooses the religious right over the human right to live your life without pain and suffering. For this, history will judge us equal to the political leadership last seen in the Dark Ages. Despite this, I believe that we are at the dawn of a new medical renaissance, and not even the extreme right wing in this country can stop it. The mass of Americans will stop it.

We have all known someone who is suffering from Alzheimer's disease or Lou Gehrig's disease or diabetes or a spinal cord injury, and now we have hope that stem cell research can unlock the secrets to relieve suffering. We could get there faster if we renew our relevance as political leaders and support groundbreaking scientific and medical research, but we will get there.

Today, 47 million Americans have no health insurance. Millions of other Americans can barely afford health care and still others avoid going to the doctor because of copays or having to work a second or third job to make ends meet. More and more companies are forcing their workers to shoulder most, if not all, of the financial burden of obtaining health care. Health care costs in this country are soaring and there appears to be no end in sight.

This is health care in America today. But tomorrow it will be different.

Scientists have cracked the genetic code, taking the first steps to predicting serious illness and disease before a baby is born. Treatments will come before the baby is born. The day is coming when we will be able to predict and treat serious illness and disease before it strikes.

Traditional health insurance as we know it will end. We will have no alternative, but to have universal national coverage.

Today, we talk about prevention and we mean going to the doctor before we get sick. Tomorrow we will redefine prevention as curing what ails you before it ails you. The heroes and heroines are working in the research laboratories right now. People do not read about it in the newspapers or see it on television, but they are there and they are changing their world for the better. It will not come easy and it will not come quick, and in some cases, it will not come cheap.

I look ahead to see a world where we care enough about one another that we will vow as a nation to follow the oath I take as a doctor. Do everything in your power to alleviate pain and suffering.

We voted for hope in the House of Representatives last night. The President will try and take that away. But he cannot stop the spark of genius God gave to men and women of faith and science.

The American people may not have reason to believe in their national leaders, but they do have every reason to be proud of the men and women who use science, intellect and personal faith to save lives and end suffering.

Universal coverage is coming sooner than you think.

SMART SECURITY

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Mr. Speaker, it is time for Congress to discuss the war in Iraq and how to end the terrible suffering that it is causing our troops, their families and the Iraqi people.

First and foremost, I honor, I support the brave men and women who are serving our country in Iraq, and I believe that the best way to support them is to establish a plan to bring them home. In just over 2 years of war, more than 1,600 American soldiers and

an estimated 25,000 Iraqi civilians have been killed. The number of American wounded, according to the Pentagon, is greater than 12,000 and that does not count the invisible mental wounds they are bringing home, which afflict as many as 25,000 more of our soldiers.

The war in Iraq has also cost our country about \$200 billion in slightly more than 2 years. With this much money on the line, do the American people not deserve to know what the President's plan is for Iraq? How long he expects U.S. troops to remain there? How much this war will cost all told and how he plans to pay for it?

I credit the many brave individuals in Iraq who risked their lives to give back to the Iraqi people by voting in their January election, but after the election, our continued presence in Iraq has caused America to be seen by the Iraqi people as an occupying power, not as a liberating force.

Our continued military presence in Iraq works against efforts for democracy. It provides a rallying point for angry insurgents and ultimately makes the United States less safe. That is why earlier today I offered an amendment to the Defense Authorization Bill for fiscal year 2006. My amendment expressed the sense of the Congress that the President must develop a plan to bring our troops home and that he must submit this plan to the appropriate committee in our Congress.

We can truly support our troops by bringing them home. At the same time, withdrawing U.S. troops must not result in abandoning a country that has been devastated. We must assist Iraq, not through our military but through the international humanitarian efforts.

This humanitarian approach is reflected in the SMART Security legislation, H. Con. Res. 158, that I have introduced with the support of 49 of my House colleagues.

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SMART security is a sensible, multi-lateral American response to terrorism for the 21st century.

The SMART approach would defend America by relying on the very best of American values: our commitment to peace and freedom, our compassion for the people of the world, and our capacity for multilateral leadership. This is the very essence of SMART security.

SMART security will prevent terrorism by addressing the very conditions which give rise to terrorism in the first place: poverty, despair, and resource scarcity. SMART will ensure America's security by reaching out and engaging in the Muslim world. Instead of rushing off to war for the wrong reasons, SMART security encourages the United States to work with other nations to address the most pressing global issues.

There is a demonstrated link between debt relief and lack of support for terrorism. That is why SMART security encourages the world's wealthy nations to provide debt relief and developmental aid for the world's poorest countries.

SMART security encourages democracy-building, human rights education, conflict resolution through non-military means, educational opportunities, particularly for women and girls, and strengthening civil society programs in the developing world.

Mr. Speaker, our future efforts in Iraq must take the SMART approach: humanitarian assistance to rebuild Iraq's war-torn physical and economic infrastructure. Congress must commit to this type of support for Iraq, not a continuation of a military approach.

It is time to support our troops and begin the difficult recovery process from a long and destructive war. The best way to do this is to bring our troops home. Mr. Speaker, our troops deserve nothing less.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. JONES) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. JONES of North Carolina addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BURTON of Indiana addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FRANKS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FRANKS of Arizona addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. EMANUEL) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. EMANUEL addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. FILNER) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. FILNER addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. DAVIS of Illinois addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Ms. BEAN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Ms. BEAN addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

PERSONAL REFLECTIONS ON IRAQ

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. OSBORNE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the majority leader.

Mr. OSBORNE. Mr. Speaker, it is my privilege this evening to be joined by some of my colleagues. We went to Iraq a few weeks ago. We find a lot of conversation on the House floor about what should and should not be done, and so we would like to take this opportunity to discuss what we saw.

I guess one of the main objectives tonight is to inform the public that this is not always a highly partisan issue. The Members that went to Iraq were both Republicans and Democrats. We got along very well. We continue to get along very well. Sometimes the general impression that is conveyed by conversation on the House floor is that we are always at each other's throats and that this is what politics is all about. I think this is very misleading in many cases; and as a result, we hope to have a bipartisan discussion tonight of those events that we encountered as we traveled overseas.

Those who went with us were the gentleman from New Hampshire (Mr. BRADLEY), the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. BEAUPREZ), who is here now, the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. DAVIS), the gentleman from Texas (Mr. NEUGEBAUER), and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. UDALL).

As we talked to the soldiers over there, we often heard this comment: there seem to be really two wars. There is the war that oftentimes is seen on television; and certainly the bombings, the beheadings and all the really violent things we see are very true, they are part of this conflict; but also the soldiers would continually mention the fact that there is another war that they are seeing, another war they are fighting that oftentimes is not conveyed over the airwaves. So we would like to really discuss these issues.

I have made three trips to Iraq. I have been to Afghanistan, Kuwait, and Jordan twice, Landstuhl Air Base in Germany a couple of times, and Walter Reed many times. So I have had many chances to talk to the soldiers. And I guess the thing that continues to impress me and the overwhelming impression that I get is the efficiency of our Army, the sense of mission, the sense of accomplishment, and a generally upbeat attitude.

Now, certainly being in Iraq or Kuwait or Afghanistan, or in a hospital, cannot be an entirely uplifting experience; and there is some hardship and there is some difficulty. But, still, it seems the soldiers are amazingly intact and amazingly upbeat when you consider their circumstances.

I will just mention two things on this trip and then turn it over to some of my other colleagues here for discussion. The first stop that we had in Iraq was at al Asad. Al Asad is a base out in the desert. It is in al Anbar Province, which is the largest province in Iraq. It is a desert area. It is becoming a fairly dangerous area because many of the insurgents have been driven out of the cities and are now in the desert. So it is a fairly wild situation.

In my previous trips, again I had always had a fairly positive reception from the troops. But as we landed in al Anbar, I thought, well, this is the place where I am going to start hearing the complaints. Because there was not a blade of grass, there was not a tree, obviously very little to do socially, and quite a large number of troops out there. There are two groups from Nebraska, one was a medical troop and one was a transportation group. So I spent quite a bit of time talking to those soldiers, probably met about 100 of them personally, and there were about another 80 who were out on patrol. Again, the same attitude that we had encountered other places was very prevalent. They were proud of what they were doing, they had a sense of mission, and generally were very positive about what was going on.

So that trip, the first part, was, again, somewhat of a surprise in view of the surroundings. The second area that I want to mention was towards the end of our trip. We went to an Iraqi women's caucus, and this caucus was held in Jordan on the banks of the Dead Sea. And the reason we went over there was that we had formed an Iraqi Women's Caucus for Women's Issues here in Washington.

The genesis of that caucus was simply a conversation between Paul Wolfowitz, Jennifer Dunn, and myself, where we began to speculate on the role of women in the new Iraqi government as the war progressed. And we began to talk about the fact that women would certainly play an important role; that women oftentimes are the peacemakers; and possibly to have a positive resolution to this whole conflict would have to involve the women of Iraq.

So we began to move forward on this. Iraqi women were brought to the United States. And part of this movement was to bring Iraqi women over to the Dead Sea, out of Iraq, where they could learn a little more about democracy and strategies in terms of running for office and so on.

So there were 1,000 women who applied for 250 spots at this seminar. And so we met with those 250 women. They came by auto, and they came from all